

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP – December 25, 2011

Announcements

- Register now for the Winter Training webcast in Bellevue by paying the \$80 (including outline) tax-deductible donation at the book table. The training schedule is on the back.
- Pick up a copy of the “Four Great Pillars in the Lord’s Recovery” Morning Revival this morning.
- The saints in Iligan and Cagayan de Oro in the southern Philippines suffered a devastating typhoon about a week ago. A few saints lost their lives and several lost their homes and/or belongings. If you are burdened to donate, please designate your offering “For Philippines”.

Suggestions for Prayer

(see *beseeking.org*)

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lord’s move in Europe • Lord’s move in Japan • Robertsons in Sao Paulo • Gospel in Middle East • Violence in Mexico • The training in Boston • DCP: Internet Defense | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus work: freshmen • Bellingham, Vancouver, Richland, Olympia, and Yakima, WA • 2012 Memorial Day Conference in Bellevue • Winter Training • Increase in Bellevue & Renton |
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This Week: December 26 – January 1

Morning Revival: *Four Great Pillars in the Lord’s Recovery, wk. 2*

Hall Cleaning: Downstairs – Team 8 (Overlake – Korean speaking)
Upstairs – Kirkland

Tuesday	10:00 am 7:00 pm	Sisters’ prayer in Multipurpose Rm.
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Wednesday	7:00 pm	No prayer, ministry meeting or breakfast this week (see training schedule on back)
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Saturday	8:30 am	
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Lord’s Day	9:30 am	Lord’s Table
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December

26-31	Winter Training, Anaheim, CA
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27-1/4	Winter Training Webcast, Bellevue, WA
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January

25-26	International Chinese-speaking Conference, Taipei, Taiwan
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28 – 2/5	Strengthen the church in Bellingham
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Ministry Reading Portion

CHAPTER SIX

THE FIRST STEP OF GOD'S BUILDING WORK— THE BREAKING DOWN OF THE CROSS

The first step in God's building is the work of breaking down. In relation to the building, God speaks of breaking down the middle wall of partition through the cross in Ephesians 2:14-16. The middle wall of partition is the law. The law has the flesh as its basis; thus, the breaking down of the law is the breaking down of the flesh. With the Israelites and the Gentiles, the flesh is something of the old creation. If we did not have the old creation, there would be no flesh and no law, and without the law there would be no middle wall of partition. Ephesians 2 clearly shows, however, that there is a middle wall of partition, a division, between Israel and the Gentiles, because they are both in the old creation and thus have the flesh. The law was given according to the flesh.

Romans 7:5 shows that the law is related to the flesh. The law and the flesh are like a couple. One is the husband, the other is the wife, and the two are always together. As long as the law is present, the flesh is present; when man lives by the flesh, he desires to keep the law. Those who are well behaved keep the law; those who are not well behaved break the law and condemn themselves before the law. We cannot separate the flesh from the law. If man had not fallen and become the flesh, God would not have needed to give the law; it would have been sufficient to have God as life. The life signified by the tree of life in the garden of Eden is God. The law at Mount Sinai was added by God so that man would know the flesh and so that the flesh would be condemned (v. 7; 5:20). Therefore, to abolish the law is to abolish the flesh, and to abolish the flesh is to abolish the old creation.

The first step in God's building work is to break down the old creation. All of the distinctions between Jews and Gentiles are in the old creation. Once the cross breaks down the old creation, the distinctions between Jews and Gentiles are over, and the two become one. Among us, it seems as if there are many "Jewish" and "Gentile" distinctions. For example, we often hear some say, "He is a Gentile; I am a true Israelite." The sisters feel that they are "Israelites" because they are meek and that the brothers are "Gentiles" because they are rough and wild. The sisters are like Jacob, who dwells in tents, and the brothers are like Esau, who hunts in the fields (Gen. 25:27). These are "Jewish" and "Gentile" characterizations. You should not think that I am joking regarding these distinctions among us. When problems arise among the brothers, they often say, "We cannot be one; we cannot coordinate together." This

indicates that there are distinctions of the flesh among them. It also means that these distinctions have not been broken down by the cross.

THE CROSS BREAKING DOWN EVERY LAW OF THE COMMANDMENTS IN ORDINANCES

In the past some have stood up and exhorted the brothers and sisters in tears, saying that the requirement for us to receive the blessing is the one accord and that if we are not in one accord, the blessing will trickle away. But we have discovered that the more people exhort, the less the brothers and sisters seem to be in one accord. Exhortation cannot cause us to have the one accord. There is only one way to have the one accord—the breaking down of the cross. We need to see that the cross has already broken down the ordinances. It has broken down all the grounds that we use to justify ourselves and to condemn others. Furthermore, it has broken down the basis, the foundation, of the ordinances, which is the old creation. Such a seeing will cause us to have the genuine one accord.

In the church life those who are willing to speak may feel that they are “non-Gentiles” and that those who do not speak are “Gentiles.” Those who always open their mouths to “fellowship” in this way often secretly justify themselves for being good and weighty. However, others among us who do not speak as freely may simply be swallowing words that are on the tip of their tongue. There is a kind of self-justification and condemnation of others in this as well. There are too many situations like this among the brothers and sisters. We do not quarrel, argue, or fight outwardly because we love the Lord, fear Him, and desire His blessing. However, our countenance often changes, and our manners are unnatural. We are merely trying to suppress ourselves. What is this? This shows that we are not in harmony and are unable to coordinate with others. Any change in countenance and manners is an expression of discord that comes from the old creation, the flesh, and the ordinances of self-justification.

When the Holy Spirit comes and breaks down the old creation in us, our person will be broken down. Those who do not speak will speak, and those who love to speak will shut their mouths. Those who do not speak will no longer condemn those who speak, and those who love to speak will no longer condemn those who do not. For example, saying that the sisters should cover their heads and keep their place is a dead ordinance enacted upon the flesh. This is an expression of the old creation and needs to pass through the breaking of the cross. Once the sisters have been broken by the cross, they will no longer feel that they are sisters; this is not to say that they forget they are sisters but that they will no longer remain in ordinances. In the same way, when an elder who has been broken by God speaks with the smallest brother, he will not feel that he is an elder speaking with a mere brother. The elder will not forget that he is an elder; he simply will not act out of a sensation of “being an elder.”

An elder may feel that others should speak to him in a manner, tone, and expression which reflect his “superior position,” because an “elder ought to be respected by all.” What is this? This is the flesh; it is a commandment of the flesh that is of the old creation. After the Holy Spirit works to overturn this elder, breaking down the old creation within him, he will still be an elder, but he will not have the “sensation” of being an elder. We will no longer feel that he is an “elder”; rather, we will feel that Christ is in him, the building of Christ is in him, and God is in him.

In the church life young people among us often complain, saying, “All the elders do is step on us and look down on us. Don’t they know that the young have a potential for greatness? Even though we are young, they were once young as well. So why do they think lightly of us? They should help us, cultivate us, lead us, and teach us what we do not know.” Thus, the law, the Ten Commandments, is present among us. However, in speaking of the qualifications of an elder, Paul did not establish as many laws as these young people; these young people make one law after another. When the Holy Spirit works and breaks down these young people, they will say, “O Lord, have mercy on me; it is not a matter of the elders either regarding me or looking down on me; it is a matter of my person being broken down and of Christ being built in me. O Lord, fill me.” When this happens, there will be building; there will be the work of God among these young people. Even though they may be young, a portion of the church, a portion of the Body of Christ, a portion of something spiritual, is expressed in them nevertheless.

Witness Lee, *The Church as the Body of Christ*, Published by Living Stream Ministry.
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2011 Winter Training Webcast Schedule	
Tuesday, Dec. 27 th	7:00 pm
Wednesday, Dec. 28 th	7:00 pm
Thursday, Dec. 29 th	7:00 pm
Friday, Dec. 30 th	7:00 pm (open meeting)
Saturday, Dec. 31 st	9:00 am & 10:30 am
Lord’s Day, Jan. 1 st	Following Lord’s Table (open meeting) 7:00 pm (open meeting)
Monday, Jan. 2 nd	9:00 am & 10:30 am
Tuesday, Jan. 3 rd	7:00 pm
Wednesday, Jan. 4 th	7:00 pm